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GRAND LODGE OF IDAHO
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To: All Masons in Idaho
Re: Grand Master's Message: Returning authority to lodges to meet

Brothers:

As we have dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic these last months, there has been a remarkably low number of cases within the Idaho Masonic Family. Your good judgement has been obvious, and it has been hard on us all to cease meeting as Masons and with our Concordant and Appendant bodies. I am thankful for the technology that has allowed us to have our 'social' ZOOM meetings, but we are looking forward to a return to our lodges.

Masons in the Grand Jurisdiction of Idaho were placed under Grand Master Hall's Edict #1 on March 17, 2020. All Masons in the Jurisdiction of Idaho were ordered to suspend attendance at all Masonic meetings or gatherings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I salute Grand Master Hall for his tough decision to close Masonry to protect the health of all.

Grand Master Hall's edict has now ended, and given our responsible actions, I have decided not to continue it. Therefore, the Masons of Idaho are now free to decide for themselves if they will attend Masonic meetings or gatherings. Remember, all we do in Masonry must be of our own free will. The Masonic lodges of Idaho have been given the authority to reopen, if their officers decide local conditions allow. When lodges make the decision to reopen, lodge members will be notified, as well as the other groups meeting in the lodge's building.

As the pandemic has unfolded, certain practices have become commonplace to attempt to reduce its spread. The Grand Lodge of Idaho has issued guidelines for safely meeting based on those practices. The officers of each lodge can modify those guidelines as they set their own rules for safely meeting given the local conditions. Everyone attending a meeting or gathering is asked to abide by those local rules for the safety of all.

A significant number of our Masonic family are categorized as "at-risk" for the virus. A brother's attendance at lodge meetings and other activities is voluntary. An absence will not be held against any member for not attending because of health concerns. If a Lodge feels uncomfortable about having a meeting or activity, then do not have one. No penalty will be imposed for that decision.

Our Concordant and Appendant bodies each have their own leadership and rules to follow. Many of them are governed nationally or even internationally. Some bodies may be already authorized to reopen while others may not. We must be respectful of each body and their decision to reopen or remain closed because of the COVID-19 situation

I know we have a lot to do as we get back into our lodges. This period has been hard on membership and finances. Your officers of the Grand Lodge of Idaho are ready to help you in any way we can.

Fraternally yours,

MW Grand Master Steve Zimmerman
Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Idaho

